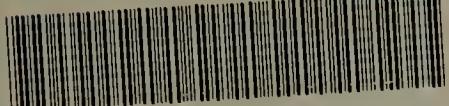


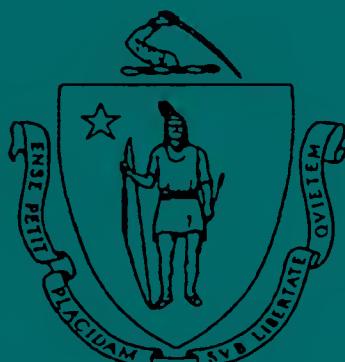
MASS. ED 21.2: ST 29/7

UMASS/AMHERST



312066016461641

State Role in Strengthening Educator Quality



GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

JAN 11 1999

University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

Board of Education Meeting
May 15, 1998

Massachusetts Department of Education

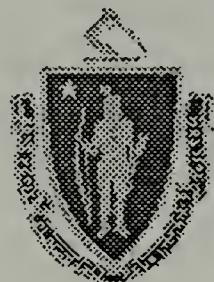
NOTE

The material in this document accompanies the presentation entitled "State Role in Strengthening Educator Quality" made to the Massachusetts State Board of Education by the Massachusetts Department of Education on May 15, 1998.

A number of sample test items are presented in this document to illustrate some of the types and formats of items used on the Massachusetts Teacher Tests™. The sample items are meant only to be illustrative. The samples are not material from this program.

Sample responses to several open-response items are presented in this document. The sample responses are provided to illustrate varying levels of performance; they are not necessarily representative of expected responses from the candidates who will take the Massachusetts Teacher Tests. The samples are not material from this program.

State Role in Strengthening Educator Quality



Board of Education Meeting

May 15, 1998

Massachusetts Department of Education



Strengthening Educator Quality

GOALS FOR THIS MORNING

- Describe the current Massachusetts policy context for strengthening educator quality
- Focus on the certification tests, especially the timetable for setting the qualifying scores
- Seek Board views on immediate certification test issues
- Identify issues and timetable for future Board consideration and action

Massachusetts Department of Education



Strengthening Educator Quality

STATE AND LOCAL ROLES

- State Roles
 - Planning, coordinating, and supporting
 - Establishing professional standards
 - Approving preparation programs
 - Certifying individuals
 - Managing and reporting information
- Local Roles
 - Hiring
 - Evaluating
 - Supporting

Massachusetts Department of Education

3



Strengthening Educator Quality

SEQUENCE OF EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

- Recruitment
- Preparation
- Certification
 - Provisional
 - Provisional with Advanced Standing
 - Standard
- Employment
- Recertification
- Continuing professional growth

Massachusetts Department of Education

4



Strengthening Educator Quality

CERTIFICATION: PURPOSE

- Ensure that teachers and administrators meet the state standards required for employment by a school district or an approved special education private school

Massachusetts Department of Education

5



Strengthening Educator Quality

CERTIFICATION: ROUTES

- State-Approved Program (Institutional endorsement)
 - College or university
 - Other organization
 - District
 - Interstate reciprocity
- Individual Program (Department review)
 - Individual Transcript Evaluation
 - Certification Review Panel

Massachusetts Department of Education

6



Strengthening Educator Quality

CERTIFICATION: STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATES

- Provisional
 - Bachelor's degree with arts/sciences or interdisciplinary major (24 semester hours)
 - Two-part test
 - "Sound moral character"
- Provisional with Advanced Standing
 - Same as Provisional PLUS
 - Study of teaching or administration (15 semester hours) AND
 - 150 hours supervised practice

Massachusetts Department of Education

7



Strengthening Educator Quality

CERTIFICATION: STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDARD CERTIFICATE

- Master's degree or equivalent program
 - Graduate level study of the subject matter
 - Graduate level study of teaching or administration
 - Research project
- 400-hour clinical experience

Massachusetts Department of Education

8



Strengthening Educator Quality

CERTIFICATION TESTS: ONE COMPONENT OF CERTIFICATION

- Board authorization for Commissioner to select contractor
- Selection process
 - Request for Responses (RFR)
 - Two responses
 - Review of proposals: paper and interview
 - Selection by Commissioner: National Evaluation Systems
- NES qualifications and experience

Massachusetts Department of Education

9



Strengthening Educator Quality

DESCRIPTION OF THE TESTS

- Communication and Literacy Skills Test
- 30 Subject Tests

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™

Massachusetts Department of Education

10



Strengthening Educator Quality

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

- Taken by all candidates for provisional or advanced provisional certification
- Measures the reading and writing skills necessary to communicate effectively with students, parents, and the community
- Measures these skills in a variety of ways

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™

Massachusetts Department of Education

11



Strengthening Educator Quality

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

- Reading Subtest
- Writing Subtest

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™

Massachusetts Department of Education

12



Strengthening Educator Quality

READING SUBTEST

- Vocabulary
- Main idea
- Writer's purpose
- Relationship of ideas
- Reasoning
- Outlining/summarizing

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

13

READING SUBTEST: Sample Passage (partial)

Read the selection from *Images of the Past* by T. Douglas Price and Gary M. Feinman. Then answer the questions that follow.

Systematic Settlement Pattern Surveys

- 1 Traditionally archaeologists have depended on excavation as the primary means for obtaining information. Paradoxically, however, when archaeologists excavate sites, they also destroy the buried deposits of material. Unlike physics or chemistry, in which experiments can be repeated numerous times under the same conditions, archaeologists can only dig a particular area once. Excavations, therefore, proceed slowly and carefully, to record as much detailed information as possible. Because of limited time and money, we are lucky to investigate more than a small part of any one site, or more than a few sites in a given area.
- 2 Sociologists would be uncomfortable describing a modern city from only a few interviews and often supplement detailed accounts with broad urban surveys or censuses. For similar reasons, geologists and geographers often combine very specific information gathered from soil probes or individual field studies with the larger-scale perspective provided by satellite imagery. Over the last 50 years, archaeologists have developed a technique, called a systematic settlement pattern survey, for studying areas larger than one or a few sites.
- 3 Archaeologists have for a long time used surface survey procedures to locate sites based on the presence of artifactual and architectural debris on the ground. They frequently use an systematic surveys, or reconnaissances, to find sites . . .

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST
READING SUBTEST: SAMPLE PASSAGE

Read the selection from *Images of the Past* by T. Douglas Price and Gary M. Feinman.
Then answer the questions that follow.

Systematic Settlement Pattern Surveys

1 Traditionally archaeologists have depended on excavation as the primary means for obtaining information. Paradoxically, however, when archaeologists excavate sites, they also destroy the buried deposits of material. Unlike physics or chemistry, in which experiments can be repeated numerous times under the same conditions, archaeologists can only dig a particular area once. Excavations, therefore, proceed slowly and carefully, to record as much detailed information as possible. Because of limited time and money, we are lucky to investigate more than a small part of any one site, or more than a few sites in a given area.

2 Sociologists would be uncomfortable describing a modern city from only a few interviews and often supplement detailed accounts with broad urban surveys or censuses. For similar reasons, geologists and geographers often combine very specific information gathered from soil probes or individual field studies with the larger-scale perspective provided by satellite imagery. Over the last 50 years, archaeologists have developed a technique, called a systematic settlement pattern survey, for studying areas larger than one or a few sites.

3 Archaeologists have for a long time used surface survey procedures to locate sites based on the presence of artifactual and architectural debris on the ground. They frequently use unsystematic surveys, or reconnaissances, to find sites to excavate. Over the last several decades, archaeologists have refined regional archaeological survey procedures. In systematic surveys, large blocks of land are thoroughly and carefully walked over to locate surface evidence of past occupations. These occupations, which are dated by the artifactual scatters associated with them, are placed on aerial photographs or topographic maps. The entire distribution of sites known for each particular period represents that era's settlement pattern.

4 The first systematic settlement pattern survey was carried on in the Virú Valley on the north coast of Peru soon after World War II by Gordon Willey, of Harvard University. Willey designed this study to determine the geographic and chronological position of sites, to outline the developmental history of settlement, and to reconstruct cultural institutions as far as they were reflected in the settlement data. To achieve these ends, Willey and his colleagues walked over the valley, mapping a total of 315 archaeological sites. These sites were dated and classified according to estimated function, determined primarily by site size, location, and the kind of architecture visible on the surface. Pieces of pottery on the ground surface were used to date the sites. Through this extensive surface survey, Willey obtained a regional overview of changing patterns of settlement that he could supplement with detailed excavations at a few sites.

5 Since Willey's pioneering study, systematic settlement pattern surveys have been undertaken in many areas, including the highlands of Oaxaca and central Mexico, the rivers and foothills of Southwest Asia, the mountain valleys of the Andes, and the deserts and plateaus of the southwestern United States. Surveys are most successful when artifacts are readily visible on the ground. Such conditions are found frequently in semiarid climates, where vegetation is limited and soil formation is slow.

6 Archaeological surveys provide a variety of information about the past. The number and sizes of sites enable the archaeologists to estimate ancient population size and changes in demography over time. Archaeologists also can examine the distribution of sites on the landscape in relation to different kinds of soil, topographic features, and resources.

7 Like household interviews and censuses, soil probes and satellite images, excavations and surveys provide complementary insights. Excavations yield detailed, specific, more precise observations at a small scale. Surveys provide broader, less fine-grained information at a larger scale. When used alone, each method can provide misleading results because of small sample size (excavation) and the reliance on surface materials no longer in their primary context (survey). The most complete descriptions are achieved when both are used.

READING SUBTEST: Sample Item

Which of the following lists best summarizes the main points of the selection?

- A — Comparison of information provided by excavations and settlement pattern surveys
 - Surveying the Vira Valley of Peru
 - Using archaeological surveys to estimate the size of ancient populations
- B — Why excavations must be conducted slowly and carefully
 - Comparison of techniques used by sociologists and archaeologists
 - Major sites of systematic settlement pattern surveys
 - Assessment of various techniques used by archaeologists
- C — Using survey procedures to locate promising excavation sites
 - Contributions of Gordon Willey to the field of archaeology
 - Strengths and shortcomings of settlement pattern surveys
- D — Limitations of excavations as a means of obtaining information
 - Steps taken to refine surface survey procedures
 - Information provided by settlement pattern surveys
 - Complementarity of excavations and settlement pattern surveys

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

READING SUBTEST: SAMPLE ITEM

Which of the following lists best summarizes the main points of the selection?

- A. — Comparison of information provided by excavations and settlement pattern surveys
 - Surveying the Virú Valley of Peru
 - Using archaeological surveys to estimate the size of ancient populations
- B. — Why excavations must be conducted slowly and carefully
 - Comparison of techniques used by sociologists and archaeologists
 - Major sites of systematic settlement pattern surveys
 - Assessment of various techniques used by archaeologists
- C. — Using survey procedures to locate promising excavation sites
 - Contributions of Gordon Willey to the field of archaeology
 - Strengths and shortcomings of settlement pattern surveys
- D. — Limitations of excavations as a means of obtaining information
 - Steps taken to refine surface survey procedures
 - Information provided by settlement pattern surveys
 - Complementarity of excavations and settlement pattern surveys

READING SUBTEST: Sample Item

Define the underlined word.

A. Define the word abolish (Write your definition on the lines below.)

B. Define the word formidable (Write your definition on the lines below.)

C. Define the word obstruct (Write your definition on the lines below.)

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

READING SUBTEST: SAMPLE ITEMS

Define the underlined word.

A. Define the word abolish. (Write your definition on the lines below.)

B. Define the word formidable. (Write your definition on the lines below.)

C. Define the word obstruct. (Write your definition on the lines below.)



Strengthening Educator Quality

WRITING SUBTEST SECTIONS

- Grammar and Usage
- Written Summary
- Written Composition
- Written Mechanics (Dictation)

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

17

GRAMMAR AND USAGE:

Sample Correct Answers

Sample Item

The following sentence contains one or more grammatical errors.
Rewrite the sentence in proper grammatical form.

1. A distinguished scholar and a great teacher, Professor Smith's famous lecture on the pyramids are not to be missed.

Because Professor Smith is a distinguished scholar and a great teacher, his famous lecture on the pyramids is not to be missed.

Professor Smith is a distinguished scholar and a great teacher whose famous lectures on the pyramids are not to be missed.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—GRAMMAR AND USAGE: SAMPLE ITEM

The following sentence contains one or more grammatical errors. Rewrite the sentence in proper grammatical form.

A distinguished scholar and a great teacher, Professor Smith's famous lecture on the pyramids are not to be missed.

Sample Correct Answers:

Because Professor Smith is a distinguished scholar and a great teacher, his famous lecture on the pyramids is not to be missed.

Professor Smith is a distinguished scholar and a great teacher whose famous lectures on the pyramids are not to be missed.

WRITTEN SUMMARY:

Sample Passage (partial)

The Meaning of the Constitution

How to interpret the U.S. Constitution has long been a subject of debate among lawyers, legal scholars, and other academics. More often than not, such controversies have focused on what the Founding Fathers meant to accomplish during the summer of 1787. According to certain enthusiasts, all judicial decisions concerning constitutional questions should be based upon the framers' original intentions. But is this really possible? Can we determine with reasonable clarity what the founders had in mind?

A review of relevant documents and the conduct of participants in the Constitutional Convention suggests that doing so is not quite as easy as some believe.

adopted rigid rules of secrecy. No reporters were allowed on the convention floor, and the only contemporary newspaper stories we have of the debates are based largely on unverifiable rumors. Moreover, the delegates themselves observed the rule of secrecy with a strictness that is almost inconceivable in our age of journalistic leaks. More than thirty years passed before a first-hand account of the convention's transactions was published.

Of the three accounts that did appear, two are of little or no use to anyone seeking to discover the founders' intentions. One was no more than a straightforward listing of resolutions, motions, and vote tallies; another, though more informative, was thoroughly unreliable.

This leaves us with James Madison's *Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787*. As a leading figure in the movement to reorganize the central government, Madison was certainly as well...

19

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST
WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN SUMMARY: SAMPLE PASSAGE

This section of the writing subtest presents a passage for you to summarize in your own words.

Your summary should effectively communicate the main idea and essential points of the passage. You are expected to identify the relevant information and communicate it clearly and concisely in your own words.

The final version of your summary should conform to the conventions of edited American English, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

The Meaning of the Constitution

How to interpret the U.S. Constitution has long been a subject of debate among lawyers, legal scholars, and other academics. More often than not, such controversies have focused on what the Founding Fathers meant to accomplish during the summer of 1787. According to certain authorities, all judicial decisions concerning constitutional questions should be based upon the framers' original intentions. But is this really possible? Can we determine with reasonable clarity what the founders had in mind? A review of relevant documents and the conduct of participants in the Constitutional Convention suggests that doing so is not quite as easy as some believe.

A major problem that advocates of original intent immediately confront is the poor quality of documentary evidence describing the convention's proceedings. To minimize outside pressure on their deliberations, delegates to the convention adopted rigid rules of secrecy. No reporters were allowed on the convention floor, and the only contemporary newspaper stories we have of the debates are based largely on unverifiable rumors. Moreover, the delegates themselves observed the rule of secrecy with a strictness that is almost inconceivable in our age of journalistic leaks. More than thirty years passed before a first-hand account of the convention's transactions was published.

Of the three accounts that did appear, two are of little or no use to anyone seeking to discover the founders' intentions. One was no more than a straightforward listing of resolutions, motions, and vote tallies; another, though more informative, was thoroughly unreliable.

This leaves us with James Madison's *Notes of Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787*. As a leading figure in the movement to reorganize the central government, Madison was certainly as well qualified as anyone to comment on the convention's proceedings. Indeed, many contemporaries viewed the brilliant Virginian as the "father of the Constitution." He was not, however, a skilled stenographer. And despite the care he bestowed on his notes, they contain significant omissions. Although Madison provided a reasonably detailed account of his own speeches, his description of what others had to say is much more limited. No one can determine with any certainty how much has been lost.

What makes these omissions so significant is the manner in which the founders conducted their work. Hailing from different regions and with different interests, delegates to the convention soon realized that nothing could be accomplished without compromise. Nearly everyone had to give way on some point or another during four months of often heated debate. In the end, few if any participants approved all of the provisions contained in the final document. Indeed, three of the forty-two delegates present at the final session declined to sign the Constitution. The only surprise was that more of them did not refuse.

In light of the foregoing, it is unlikely that we will ever know the founders' original intent. But this is hardly cause for despair. As one eminent jurist has written, the framers' most enduring contribution was the Constitution's "language and spirit. Even if they cannot point the way with precision, their legacy can still guide us."

WRITTEN SUMMARY:

Sample Response

WRITE YOUR RESPONSE HERE

In the selection entitled, The Meaning of the Constitution Interpreting the Constitution raises many questions. What did the Founding Fathers mean to do? These are questions we all ask ourselves even today.

The major problem with this passage is that, there was no documentary of the debate, so the delegates kept them secret. We can only find out about the convention in today's newspaper. There are three accounts. One was just a list and one couldn't be trusted.

James Madison was the Father of the Constitution. But he was no good at notes. He wrote a lot of notes on the debates. But also left some stuff out. What we will never know. In the convention, delegates had to debate and compromise. 2 people did not sign and thanks to James Madison we will never know why?

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN SUMMARY: SAMPLE RESPONSE

In the selection entitled, The Meaning of the Constitution. Interperting the Constitution rases many questions. What did the Founding Fathers mean to do. These are questions we all ask ourselfs, even today.

The major problem with this passage is that, there was no documentary of the debat, so the delegates kept them secret. We can only find out about the convention, in todays newspaper. There are three accounts. One was just a list and one couldnt be trusted.

James Madison was the Father of the Constitution. But he was no good at notes. He wrote a lot of notes on the debats. But also left some stuff out. What we will never know. In the convention, delegats had to debat and compermise. 42 people did not sign and thanks to James Madison we will never know, why?

WRITTEN SUMMARY:

Sample Response (partial)

WRITE YOUR RESPONSE HERE

A number of scholars and lawyers have asserted that jurists must act in accordance with the intentions of the Founding Fathers when applying elements of the U.S. Constitution to contemporary legal issues. When this assertion is examined closely, however, it is clear that determining the goals of the men who created this document in 1787 is a daunting task.

Records, correspondence, and newspaper articles concerning the Constitutional Convention are of limited value to modern interpreters. Strict rules of secrecy were adopted and honored by the participants at the convention. This maintenance of privacy allowed the delegates to engage in genuine discussions without the pressures associated with public scrutiny.

Thirty years after the convention, first-hand reports of the Convention's proceedings were finally published. But what was revealed shed only modest light on what took place or how decisions were reached. Aside from vote tallies, only James Madison wrote in a reliable way about the proceedings. While Madison was a worthy source, he primarily documented his own efforts at the convention.

Madison makes little reference, for example, to the speeches of other delegates, and he omits details concerning the controversies that emerged between men from various regions of the new country. The Founding Fathers were compelled to make difficult compromises, yet no written record exists ...

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN SUMMARY: SAMPLE RESPONSE

A number of scholars and lawyers have asserted that jurists must act in accordance with the intentions of the Founding Fathers when applying elements of the U.S. Constitution to contemporary legal issues. When this assertion is examined closely, however, it is clear that determining the goals of the men who created this document in 1787 is a daunting task.

Records, correspondence, and newspaper articles concerning the Constitutional Convention are of limited value to modern interpreters. Strict rules of secrecy were adopted and honored by the participants at the convention. This maintenance of privacy allowed the delegates to engage in genuine discussions without the pressures associated with public scrutiny.

Thirty years after the convention, first-hand reports of the Convention's proceedings were finally published. But what was revealed shed only modest light on what took place or how decisions were reached. Aside from vote tallies, only James Madison wrote in a reliable way about the proceedings. While Madison was a worthy source, he primarily documented his own efforts at the convention.

Madison makes little reference, for example, to the speeches of other delegates, and he omits details concerning the controversies that emerged between men from various regions of the new country. The Founding Fathers were compelled to make difficult compromises, yet No written record exists that can provide insight into the delegates' aims and aspirations.

Thus, it is likely that our understanding of the Founders' original intent will never be wholly clear. Nonetheless, despite our limited knowledge of the convention's proceedings, the essence of the U.S. Constitution is a valuable guide to all who frame or interpret our laws.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION:

Sample Item

Read the passage below about raising the federal tax on gasoline; then follow the instructions for writing your composition.

Should the federal tax on gasoline be raised significantly to help pay for public transportation and road improvements? Opponents argue that significantly higher gas taxes will hurt business by raising costs and will decrease the freedom of mobility of the general public. Proponents say that we need the additional revenues to finance public work projects and that U.S. citizens pay less for gasoline than do citizens in other industrial nations.

Your purpose is to write a composition, to be read by a classroom instructor, in which you indicate whether you agree or disagree that the federal tax on gasoline should be raised significantly to help pay for public transportation and road improvements. Be sure to defend your position with logical arguments and appropriate examples.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN COMPOSITION: SAMPLE ITEM

This section of the writing subtest consists of one writing assignment. You are asked to prepare a composition on an assigned topic.

Your composition should effectively communicate a whole message to the specified audience for the stated purpose. You will be assessed on your ability to express, organize, and support opinions and ideas. You will not be assessed on the position you express.

The final version of your composition should conform to the conventions of edited American English, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

Read the passage below about raising the federal tax on gasoline; then follow the instructions for writing your composition.

Should the federal tax on gasoline be raised significantly to help pay for public transportation and road improvements? Opponents argue that significantly higher gas taxes will hurt business by raising costs and will decrease the freedom of mobility of the general public. Proponents say that we need the additional revenues to finance public work projects and that U.S. citizens pay less for gasoline than do citizens in other industrial nations.

Your purpose is to write a composition, to be read by a classroom instructor, in which you indicate whether you agree or disagree that the federal tax on gasoline should be raised significantly to help pay for public transportation and road improvements. Be sure to defend your position with logical arguments and appropriate examples.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION:

Sample Response (partial)

WRITE YOUR RESPONSE HERE

Gasoline is not cheap. It cost \$5 for me to fill up my gas tank, that is with gas at \$25 a gallon. You try to be very careful about running your car but the next thing you know you're out of gas. Ask anyone running out of gas especially at night when on a highway when it's dark is horrible. It is dangerous to do so that is why you try to stay filled up. Gas is not the only expense. It would not be that much. But what about clothes, and you need some money to go out. Gas is all ready to expensive, why make it more? Added to all the other things it can mount up. For example, school books and fees. You have to make up a budget and stick to it. Give yourself room for one fill up a week, that's it. You have to save money aside for books, food, etc. If you need to go somewhere else tough. That's all ready the way it is, if they make gas cost more it will be worse.

Sometimes I don't think our Representatives don't listen to the people. They get on up there and forget who got them where they are. The voters who voted them in. Maybe they only come back 2 or 3 times per year. To them may be they get their expenses paid for by the government. Call somebody and have their car filled up and wash it. It is not a big deal. But ask anybody, it really is some thing to think about. You go out for lunch, that is 5 or 6 dollars, and you need the gas to get there which makes it even worse.

Do not make gas price any more. Less people could...

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN COMPOSITION: SAMPLE RESPONSE

Gasoline is not cheap. It cost \$15 for me to fill up my gas tank, that is with gas at \$1.25 a gallon. You try to be very carefull about running you're car but the next thing you know you're out of gas. Ask anyone, running out of gas especially at night when on a highway when its dark is horibal. It is dangerous to so that is why you try to stay filled up. Gas is not the only expens. \$15 would not be that much. But what about cloths, and you need some money to go out. Gas is all ready to expensive, why make it more. Added to all the other things it can mount up. For example, school books and fees. You have to make up a budget and stick to it. Give yourself room for one fillup a week, that's it. You have to save money aside for books, food, ect. If you need to go somewhere else, tough. That's all ready the way it is, if they make gas cost more it will be worst.

Sometimes I don't think our Representatives don't listen to the people. They get of up their and forget who got them where they are. The voters who voted them in. May be they only come back 2 or 3 times per year. To them may be they get their expenses payed for by the government. Call somebody and have their car filled up and wash it. It is not a big deal. But ask anybody, it really is some thing to think about. You go out for lunch, that is 5 or 6 dollars, and you need the gas to get their which makes it even worse.

Do not make gas price any more. Less people could afford it, the way it is now. It all ready cost enough. If you want to raise some thing really some one should take a look at the way the government waists money, that would be a good way to save money and not put it on gas. We put them up their, we can put them back.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION:

Sample Response (partial)

WRITE YOUR RESPONSE HERE

It is a well-known fact that Americans love their automobiles. In urban areas it is a common daily occurrence for Americans to find themselves jammed together on freeways, frequently one to a car, or bouncing over city streets pitted with huge craters and potholes. Streets and highways that were built just a few years ago are already worn out or are insufficient to handle the demands of increased traffic flow. Our government lacks the resources to finance road construction and improvements at the rate required by this intensive use. What is the solution to these problems? The federal government must act at once to raise gasoline taxes in order to finance road improvements and public transportation.

Although no one likes the idea of taxes, most citizens accept the fact that they are necessary in order to pay for services that protect or benefit the public. The only thing most citizens demand is that taxes be fair. It is the responsibility of the government to place the greatest tax burden upon those individuals who most benefit from the service that is being provided. A gasoline tax would be a prime example of this kind of policy. Those who do the most driving use the most gasoline and thus should pay most of the tax. Companies with large fleets of trucks out on the public roads every day would face a high tax rate,而 retired people or younger drivers, who do not utilize public streets that often, would be taxed at a much lower rate. In this way road improvements...

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN COMPOSITION: SAMPLE RESPONSE

It is a well-known fact that Americans love their automobiles. In urban areas it is a common daily occurrence for Americans to find themselves jammed together on freeways, frequently one to a car, or bouncing over city streets pitted with huge craters and potholes. Streets and highways that were built just a few years ago are already worn out or are insufficient to handle the demands of increased traffic flow. Our government lacks the resources to finance road construction and improvements at the rate required by this intensive use. What is the solution to these problems? The federal government must act at once to raise gasoline taxes in order to finance road improvements and public transportation.

Although no one likes the idea of taxes, most citizens accept the fact that they are necessary in order to pay for services that protect or benefit the public. The only thing most citizens demand is that taxes be fair. It is the responsibility of the government to place the greatest tax burden upon those individuals who most benefit from the service that is being provided. A gasoline tax would be a prime example of this kind of policy. Those who do the most driving use the most gasoline and thus should pay most of the tax. Companies with large fleets of trucks out on the public roads every day would face a high tax rate; retired people or younger drivers, who do not utilize public streets that often, would be taxed at a much lower rate. In this way road improvements could be financed by those who actually use the service.

In addition to funding road improvements, a higher gasoline tax might have an important secondary effect: It might lead to reduced gasoline consumption. Like all petroleum products, gasoline is a fossil fuel, and the supplies are not unlimited; there is a real possibility that one day the supplies will be exhausted. If the public is forced to pay additional taxes on every gallon of gas consumed, perhaps there will be a financial incentive to consume less. Commuters might be more motivated to car-pool, to share rides to common destinations, or to investigate alternative forms of transportation like busses, trains, bicycles, or even walking. People might think twice before jumping into their automobiles to drive around the block for a loaf of bread. More thought might go into examining the importance of various errands and into planning how these errands might be most efficiently accomplished.

(continued on next page)

If the federal government is going to raise gasoline taxes, however, they also have the responsibility to use some of the funds collected to develop and support alternative sources of transportation. The United States is far behind many other developed countries in terms of the availability and convenience of public transportation. Commuters in Asian and European countries utilize public transportation not just because gasoline prices are higher there, but because it is the easiest, most efficient way to reach one's destination. Whether it's a bullet train in Japan, a subway in France, or a tram in London, commuters in other countries have access to dependable and affordable public transportation. If the federal government is serious about extending the life of our current road and highway system, it must make a better effort to develop alternative systems of public transportation that Americans will really use.

Americans love their automobiles, and convincing them to cut down on automobile use or to seek out other forms of transportation will not be easy. Imposing increased gasoline taxes is the most equitable way to pay for the use of our current road system. Such an action also makes environmental sense, and may help move Americans toward a more responsible use of public transportation.

WRITTEN MECHANICS (DICTATION):

Sample Dictation Passage

Adapted from Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*

The edge of the sea is a strange and beautiful place. All through the long history of Earth it has been an area of unrest where waves have broken heavily against the land, where the tides have pressed forward over the continents, receded, and then returned. For no two successive days is the shore line precisely the same. Today a little more land may belong to the sea, tomorrow a little less. Always the edge of the sea remains an indefinable boundary. Contemplating the teeming life of the shore, we have a sense of the communication of some universal truth that lies just beyond our grasp. But what is the message expressed by the microscopic creatures flashing their lights in the night sea? What is the meaning of the legions of barnacles whitening the rocks with their habitations? The mystery haunts and ever eludes us, and in its very pursuit we approach the ultimate mystery of life itself.

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST

WRITING SUBTEST—WRITTEN MECHANICS: SAMPLE DICTATION PASSAGE

In this exercise, you will hear a passage read three times on audiotape. The first time, it will be read at normal speed. Then it will be read again slowly. As it is read the second time, write the passage on the lines provided below exactly as it is spoken on the tape. Then there will be two minutes of silence so that you may review and revise what you have written. Finally, the passage will be read a third time at normal speed so that you may check your work.

In your response, you should correctly use the writing mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, according to the conventions of edited American English. Do not abbreviate words. Be sure to write or print legibly, using upper-case and lower-case letters as appropriate. Responses written in all upper-case letters will be considered to have violated the rules of capitalization.

The passage below, adapted from Rachel Carson, *The Edge of the Sea*, is dictated to examinees on audiotape. It does not appear in the test booklet.

The edge of the sea is a strange and beautiful place. All through the long history of Earth it has been an area of unrest where waves have broken heavily against the land, where the tides have pressed forward over the continents, receded, and then returned. For no two successive days is the shore line precisely the same. Today a little more land may belong to the sea, tomorrow a little less. Always the edge of the sea remains an indefinable boundary. Contemplating the teeming life of the shore, we have a sense of the communication of some universal truth that lies just beyond our grasp. But what is the message expressed by the microscopic creatures flashing their lights in the night sea? What is the meaning of the legions of barnacles whitening the rocks with their habitations? The mystery haunts and ever eludes us, and in its very pursuit we approach the ultimate mystery of life itself.



Strengthening Educator Quality

SUBJECT TESTS

- Taken by candidates for provisional or advanced provisional certificates in specific teaching/subject areas
- Measure subject matter knowledge necessary to prepare lessons and teach effectively
- Measure knowledge with open-response and multiple-choice items

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

26



Strengthening Educator Quality

Subject Tests

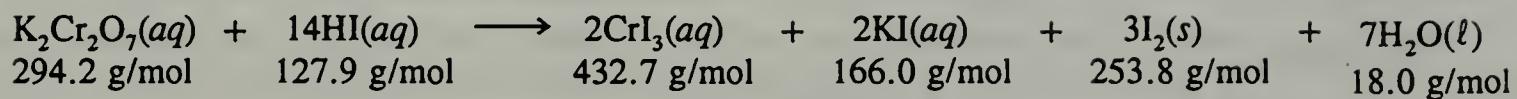
Biology	History	Special Needs
Business	Home Economics	Technology Education
Chemistry	Latin and Classical	Visual Art
Early Childhood	Humanities	
Earth Science	Mathematics	Chinese
Elementary	Middle School	French
English	Music	German
English as a Second Language	Physical Education	Italian
General Science	Physics	Portuguese
Health Education	Reading	Russian
	Social Studies	Spanish

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

27

SUBJECT TESTS: SAMPLE ITEM

Use the reaction below to answer the question that follows.



A solution that contains 98 g of $\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$ is mixed with excess HI. What is the percent yield of the reaction if 130 g of CrI_3 are collected?

- A. 48%
- B. 45%
- C. 42%
- D. 40%

SUBJECT TESTS: SAMPLE ITEM

Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.



Between December 1811 and February 1812, three large earthquakes occurred near New Madrid, Missouri. Tremors from the earthquakes were felt as far away as New York City. Although there were no instruments to record the intensity of these earthquakes, reports of damage and the distance over which the tremors were felt indicate that the largest of the earthquakes may have been stronger than the San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

Using your knowledge of the causes and characteristics of earthquakes, write an essay in which you discuss the occurrence of these earthquakes in Missouri. In your essay:

- explain why earthquakes of such magnitude are relatively rare and unexpected in Missouri as compared with an area such as California;
- describe the likely cause of the earthquakes near New Madrid, and explain what these earthquakes suggest about the geology and geologic history of this area; and
- describe the type and extent of damage to man-made structures that would likely occur if an earthquake of comparable magnitude were to strike the same area today, and explain your answer.

SUBJECT TESTS: SAMPLE RESPONSE

An earthquake is a very complex phenomena. Lots of things are involved and scientists still can't predict earthquakes very well. In 1811 and 1812 scientists didn't know about plate tectonics, so nobody could have predicted the earthquakes in Missouri.

In California earthquakes are expected because they happen often and they have the San Andrais fault. Some scientists have theories that Los Angeles will someday be as far north as San Francisco. Earthquakes happen when rocks slide past each other. Very few scientists who study earthquakes live in Missouri because earthquakes are rare and unexpected there. Earthquakes usually happen near coasts, such as California, because there are faults there, but since Missouri is far away from the ocean it doesn't get many earthquakes. The three large earthquakes in December 1811 and February 1812 were probably just random events. Since there were no instruments to record the intensity of these earthquakes, we have no way of knowing exactly what's going on with the geology and geologic history of this area.

However, just as the earthquakes in 1811 and 1812 were unexpected, that means that other earthquakes could happen anytime. Fortunately modern buildings are built to be earthquake proof so they would be okay. But a lot of older buildings and bridges would probably collapse. There would be significant damage if an earthquake of comparable magnitude struck the same area today. People could be stuck in collapsed buildings or drive off damaged bridges. There would be much chaos and fires like in the earthquakes that hit San Francisco in 1906 and the one in the late 1980s.

SUBJECT TESTS: SAMPLE RESPONSE

Earthquakes of the magnitude of those that occurred in 1811-1812 are rare in Missouri because the region is located in the approximate center of a tectonic plate. The earth's rigid, outer layer, the lithosphere, is made up of a number of these solid tectonic plates, each of which moves as a unit, pushed by convection currents in the molten asthenosphere beneath them. Most major earthquakes occur along a line where two tectonic plates meet, such as the San Andreas Fault in California. Earthquakes are common in California because along the San Andreas Fault, the Pacific Plate is moving northward in relation to the North American Plate. The two plates grind against each other as they move, creating what is called a transform fault. The two plates may become temporarily locked in places. When this happens, tension between the two plates may increase until it is released in a major earthquake.

The likely cause of the New Madrid earthquakes was movement in the Reelfoot Rift, a series of weaknesses in the North American Plate. The rift follows a line that extends north and south for hundreds of miles along the central Mississippi Valley. Movements in the North American Plate and in the plates around it periodically produce stresses along the rift, sometimes causing earthquakes. The existence of the rift suggests that the geology of the area could produce another major earthquake. It also suggests an interesting geologic history. Geologists believe that the rift formed around the beginning of the Cambrian period, approximately 600 million years ago, when forces from convection in the asthenosphere began to pull the North American plate apart. If this process had continued, the North American Plate would have split into two plates. However, the forces subsided before the plate actually split, leaving the series of weaknesses known as the Reelfoot Rift. The rift, which is called a failed rift because it did not actually separate into two plates, has since filled with sand and other sediments. These sediments contributed to the severity of the New Madrid earthquakes. Soft sediments may create a resonance condition that will amplify ground vibrations. Also, earthquakes can cause sediments to liquefy and begin to flow, causing large ground displacements. Liquefaction of sediments is even more likely if the water content of the sediments is high, as in the sediments along the Mississippi River Valley.

The occurrence of an earthquake of the same magnitude today would probably result in serious damage to most of the region's buildings, highways and bridges. Liquefaction and resonance conditions could create large ground displacements. The population has grown considerably since the earthquakes of 1811 and 1812, and the region is not prepared for a large earthquake. For example, Missouri's building codes are not as rigorous as those of California and Alaska, where the public is more aware of the threat posed by earthquakes.



Strengthening Educator Quality

TEST VALIDATION

- Validation of Test Objectives
- Validation of Test Items
- Bias Review

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™

Massachusetts Department of Education

28



Strengthening Educator Quality

VALIDATION OF TEST ITEMS

Review Criteria

- Match to test objective
- Accuracy of item
- Freedom from bias
- Job-relatedness for Massachusetts teachers

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™

Massachusetts Department of Education

29



Strengthening Educator Quality

BIAS REVIEW

Review Criteria

- Content
- Language
- Offense
- Stereotypes
- Diversity

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

30



Strengthening Educator Quality

FIRST TEST ADMINISTRATION

- Registration Numbers
- Scoring Process
- Qualifying Score Panels

Massachusetts Teacher Tests™
Massachusetts Department of Education

31



Strengthening Educator Quality

QUALIFYING SCORES

- Need to establish qualifying scores in June
(to report April 4 score results prior to July 11 test)
- Process: Commissioner will
 - Receive recommendations from educator panels
 - Receive data on passing rates
 - Consult with Board of Education and others
 - Set qualifying scores

Massachusetts Department of Education

32



Strengthening Educator Quality

TEST RESULTS

- Results will be reported to:
 - Candidates
 - Educator preparation programs
 - Department of Education

Massachusetts Department of Education

33



Strengthening Educator Quality

IMMEDIATE TEST PROGRAM POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Tests for candidates from out of state:
—Yes (What are criteria for waivers?)
2. Tests for other initial teacher and support certificates:
—Yes, beginning with Communication and Literacy Skills
3. Tests for initial administrator certificates:
—Yes, beginning with Communication and Literacy Skills

Massachusetts Department of Education

34



Strengthening Educator Quality

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Attracting and retaining high quality educators
- Certification
 - Performance-based (focused more on “outputs” than “inputs”)
 - Required mentoring for beginning educators
 - Transition from provisional with advanced standing to standard certification
- Program approval
- Recertification
- Professional development provider system
- Personnel evaluation standards

Massachusetts Department of Education

35



Strengthening Educator Quality

TIMETABLE FOR BOARD ACTION

- Revision of regulations for program approval, certification, and recertification (e.g., alignment with curriculum frameworks)—by June 1999
- Proposals for any needed changes in law—1999 legislative session

Massachusetts Department of Education

36

